THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) and (b) No Sir. During 2007-08, the total area licenced to cultivate opium poppy was 4,680 ha whereas the total area under illicit opium poppy cultivation detected and destroyed by CBN was only 443.075 ha.

(c) and (d) As and when any information is received by the Government regarding illegal cultivation of opium, necessary steps are taken in association with the local authorities to destroy the illegal poppy crops and take action against those involve.

(e) The Government of India has taken a number of steps to check illegal cultivation of opium poppy and to detect and prevent illicity trafficking in narcotic drugs (including opium):

(a) Enactment of the NDPS Act and framing of NDPS Rules which provide for stringent punishment for illicity cultivation of opium poppy and carrying out illegal opium trade;

(b) Any information regarding illicit cultivation of opium is passed on to the State Governments with a request to take necessary action;

(c) Coordination between various drug law enforcement agencies in order to impart greater cohesion to interdiction;

(d) strengthening of international liaison to improve the collection, analysis and dissemination of operational intelligence;

(e) Conducting training programmes for law enforcement officials for upgrading their skills to combat drug trafficking;

(f) Implementing a scheme to monetary rewards for information leading to seizures of narcotic drugs to informants and officers.

Declining aggregate deposits of Public Sector Banks

4232. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the share of Public Sector Banks to aggregate deposits had fallen 82.6 per cent in March, 1999 to 73.9 per cent in March, 2007, while private banks had seen their share grow from 4 per cent to 15.3 per cent in the same period;

(b) if so, whether any steps have been taken to arrest the declining trend of deposits mobilization by banks;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether setting up of new branches in rural areas formed the part of the strategy; and

(e) if so, how many new branches have been set-up and what has been the overall impact?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) to (e) The details of deposits of scheduled commercial banks (SCBs), public sector banks and private sector banks as on March, 1999 and March, 2007 are given below:—

(Amount Rs. in crore)

As on March	Scheduled commercial banks (including foreign banks)	Public sector Banks	Domestic Private sector banks
1999	7,41,660	6,07,348 (81.9%)	86,579 (11.7%)
2007	26,06,150	19,11,993 (73.4%)	5,43,361 (20.8%)

*Figures in bracket indicate %age share to total deposits of SCBs.

The public sector banks were operating 49,470 branches in June, 2007 as against 45,381 in June, 1999. The deposits of public sector banks have increased by around 215% during this period. The banks devise their own strategies to expand their business and branch network.

Public and external debts

4233. SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of public and external debt as on date;

(b) whether it is a fact that both public and external debts on Government are increasing;

(c) if so, the reasons for the increase and its effects on Indian economy and fiscal deficit; and

(d) what is the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) The public debt of Government of India, including internal and external debt, at the end of 2007-2008 (RE) was as under:—

(Rs. in crore)

Internal debt	1844110
External debt (book value)	112686
TOTAL:	1956796

(b) While internal and external debt of Central Government have been increasing in absolute terms, as percentage of GDP, it has gone down from 43.1% in 2003-04 to 41.7% in 2007-08 (RE).

(c) Central Government has been taking recourse to internal and external borrowings to finance the fiscal deficit. The marginal rise in external debt as percentage of GDP from 1.7% in 2003-04 to 2.4% in 2007-08 (RE) is largely due to increase in multilateral debt. However, reflecting the process of fiscal consolidation, internal debt as percentage of GDP has shown a decline from 41.4% in 2003-04 to 39.3% in 2007-08 (RE).

(d) The Central Government has been following a comprehensive strategy to moderate